

Supplementary Planning Information

In support of

Notification for prior approval for the proposed change of use of the agricultural building to 2no. dwelling houses (Class C3) and associated operational development under The Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, Schedule 2 Part 3 Class Q parts (a) and (b)

At

Letty Green Barn
Holwell Court Farm
Hertford Road
Hatfield
AL9 5RE

Agent

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1.0 Introduction

This document comprises planning information in support of an application for prior notification for the change of use of an agricultural building to residential (C3) use including associated building works at a barn at Letty Green Barn, Holwell Court Farm, as shown on the attached plan.

The application is made under The Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, Schedule 2 Part 3 Class Q parts (a) and (b), as amended and is designed in accordance with the technical housing standards – nationally described space standards (March 2015).

3.0 Background and Planning History

The site, including the access, spans two local authority boundaries of Welwyn Hatfield and East Herts. The physical structure of the barn is located within the local authority boundary of East Herts. The Grade II listed Holwell Court and Holwell Court Farm's yard are located to the west.

The barn is a portal-framed structure with profiled metal sheet walls and a profiled sheet roof. A track runs west to the main farm yard complex and Holwell Court and provides access to Hatfield Road.

The barn originally obtained approval under application reference 3/03/0711/FP in May 2003. Condition 2 of the approval limited the building from being used for anything other than for agricultural use. This caused application reference 3/20/1175/ARPN to be refused. Latterly, in August 2021, under application reference 3/21/0283/VAR, this condition was removed.

Subsequently, an application to convert the barn to two dwellings was submitted under reference 3/21/2180/ARPN. This obtained consent on the 12th of October 2021 as such the approval remains extant and is an important material consideration in the determination of this application.

Irrespective of the condition on the original approval for the barn, in both the prior approval applications mentioned above the planning officers were minded that that proposed conformed to the requirements of Class Q. This included that the building existed and was in use for an agricultural trade or business on the 20th March 2013. Additionally, as the proposal was for two larger dwelling houses, that the existing agricultural building changing use under Class Q did not exceed 465 square metres.

In fact, for that application, the planning officer noted that the floor area of the proposed converted barn would measure 420 square metres. As such the difference between the previously approved application on the barn and that currently before the Council is the increase in floor area to 465 square metres. This will provide for an additional bedroom

creating two five bed properties. The increase in floor area complies with the requirements of the Class Q legislation.

The increase in floor area will be through the addition of modest mezzanine floors above each of the units. As noted by Paragraph: 105 Reference ID: 13-105-20180615 of the Planning Practise Guidance, internal works are not generally development. It further states that:

“For the building to function as a dwelling it may be appropriate to undertake internal structural works, including to allow for a floor, the insertion of a mezzanine or upper floors within the overall residential floor space permitted, or internal walls, which are not prohibited by Class Q.”

A linked application, dealt with by Welwyn Hatfield Council involved the conversion of a barn into 3 smaller properties totalling a floor area of 270 square metres (application reference: 6/2022/2130/PN10). Added to the floor space currently proposed totals 735 square metres. This is below the absolute maximum floorspace that can be converted to residential of 865 square metres.

As such, given the previous extant applications and the proposed changes under this application the application before the Council can continue to be considered as adhering to the requirements of Class Q.

The same information that was submitted for the determination of the currently extant permission is submitted for this application which includes:

- Application form;
- Planning Statement;
- Existing Floorplan / Elevation Drawings;
- Proposed Floorplan / Elevation Drawings;
- Block Plan;
- Site Plan

The following confirms that the same factors that were involved in the previous application equally apply to that currently before the Council.

3.0 Criteria for Class Q under Q.1

a) Agricultural use and agricultural unit	As noted under applications references 3/20/1175/ARPN and 3/21/2180/ARPN, for the creation of residential units, the planning officers accepted the agricultural use of the barn. No changes have occurred and the current lawful use of the building remains as a barn
b) Larger dwelling houses	Two 'larger' dwellinghouses with a cumulative floorspace of 465m ² are proposed as part of the conversion of this agricultural building

c) Smaller dwelling houses	It is understood that there is currently an extant approval for three smaller units totalling 270 square metres.
d) Cumulative dwelling houses	<p>The development on this holding under Class Q both within this application and under previous development under Class Q will <u>not</u> result in either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) larger dwellinghouses having more than 465m² of floor space ii) cumulative number of separate dwellinghouses exceeding a total of 5.
e) Agricultural tenancy	No agricultural tenancy exists.
f) Termination of agricultural tenancy	N/A
g) Use of permitted development rights	In compliance with criterion g), it is the case that no other development has been <u>carried out</u> on this holding under Class A (a) or Class B (a) of Part 6 of the General Permitted development Order since 20 th March 2013.
h) External dimensions	The proposed development would not result in the external dimensions of the building extending beyond the external dimensions of the existing building at any given point.
i) Building operations / schedule of works	<p>Building operations will be minimal; please see the existing and proposed elevations.</p> <p>Schedule of Works</p> <p>A summary of the works is set out below which when viewed together do not constitute a 'rebuild' and are only those reasonably necessary for the building to function as a dwellinghouse.</p> <p><u>Structure</u></p> <p>No structural remedial or improvements works are required to facilitate the conversion to dwellings.</p> <p><u>Walls</u></p> <p>The building is to be fully enclosed and none of the existing external walls are to be replaced, with interventions in the external building fabric only those necessary for windows and doors. Existing openings will be utilised to minimise building works.</p> <p><u>Mezzanine Floor</u></p> <p>The work involves the insertion of a mezzanine floor to create an additional bedroom.</p>

	<p><u>Roof</u></p> <p>The existing roof material is to be retained and insulated internally to building regulations standard.</p> <p><u>Windows and doors</u></p> <p>As outlined above, there are some existing openings in the building and these will be utilised, including the existing sliding doors which are to be replaced with glazing. Additional openings will be inserted as shown on the plans to allow the building to function as two quality dwellinghouses and provide adequate natural light as per the requirements of Class Q.2 (g) of the GDPO. The new window and door openings have been kept to a minimum to maintain the overall appearance of an agricultural building.</p> <p><u>Internal works</u></p> <p>Within the existing building footprint, a new insulated timber stud work wall lining will be constructed.</p> <p>Insulation and internal walling will be provided to comply with modern Building Regulations.</p>
j) Protected areas	The site is not on land protected under article 2(3) and is not a conservation area, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, National Park, Broads, or World Heritage Site.
k) Site constraints	The site is not: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) A site of special scientific interest ii) A safety hazard area iii) A military explosives storage area
l) Scheduled monument	The site is not, nor does it contain a scheduled monument.
m) Listed building	The building is not listed, nor within the curtilage of a listed building.

4.0 Conditions under Q.2 (1)

a) Transport and highways	It is proposed to utilise the existing access, as shown on the submitted plan. No new or amended access is required. Sufficient car parking for the dwellings is also included on the proposed site plans.
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<p>b) Noise impacts</p>	<p>The proposed residential use will have no noise impact over and above the existing agricultural use. The building is a good distance away from other buildings and the proposal will neither impact residential amenities nor any ongoing farming operations.</p> <p>Under the previously approved application, the Environmental Health Officer simply asked that conditions were attached to any approval which included the level of insulation to be added to the conversion.</p>
<p>c) Contamination</p>	<p>There are no contamination risks identified on the site. The building has not been used to store hazardous materials, including pesticides, herbicides, fungicides, bactericides, sewage sludge, farm waste, hydrocarbons from farm machinery or for asbestos disposal. There are no known cases of spills or leaks which would give rise to contamination concerns.</p>
<p>d) Flood risk</p>	<p>The site is outside any areas at risk of flooding from rivers and seas, reservoirs or surface water as designated by the Environment Agency, and no known flooding issues have occurred on the site.</p>
<p>e) Suitability of the site – impractical or undesirable</p>	<p>The location, siting and orientation of the building is considered suitable and acceptable for residential use.</p> <p>The proposed dwellings would be located some distance from other residential properties. As such, there would be no adverse impacts on neighbouring amenity as a result of the proposal.</p> <p>National Planning Practice Guidance published in March 2015, as amended, clarifies the approach which should be taken by LPAs in making any judgement and sets out that the LPA should not consider tests from the NPPF except where these are relevant to the subject matter of the prior approval.</p> <p>The location allows for reasonable connection to services and the proposal is not unrealistic or unfeasible.</p> <p>Furthermore, the proposal would not be harmful or objectionable; it is not sited next to any land uses which could be considered damaging or detrimental to the proposal.</p>
<p>f) Design and appearance</p>	<p>The proposals for the design and appearance of the building are shown on the proposed elevation drawings. The nature and appearance of the</p>

	<p>building will not be inappropriate in the rural setting, noting in particular that the agricultural form and the existing cladding is to be retained.</p> <p>The design of the conversion, including the windows and door openings has been carefully considered to enhance the visual appearance and setting of the building, maximise the use of the space available and ensure the practicality and usefulness of the living space.</p> <p>Materials used will be of a high quality and works will be carried out to the highest standard, to ensure that the building is well constructed and energy efficient.</p>
g) Adequate natural light	<p>The submitted elevation and floorplan drawings show that appropriate natural light is provided to all habitable rooms of the dwellinghouses.</p>

5.0 Conclusion

We submit that this proposal for the change of use of an agricultural building to residential (C3) use is in accordance with the criteria set out with The Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, Schedule 2 Part 3 Class Q parts (a) and (b) as amended, and as such, does not require the Authority's prior approval as to;

- (a) transport and highways impacts of the development,
- (b) noise impacts of the development,
- (c) contamination risks on the site,
- (d) flooding risks on the site,
- (e) whether the location or siting of the building makes it otherwise impractical or undesirable for the building to change from agricultural use to a use falling within Class C3 (dwelling houses) of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order,
- (f) the design or external appearance of the building and
- (g) the provision of adequate natural light in all habitable rooms of the dwelling house

We should be grateful to receive confirmation in due course and would be happy to provide clarification on any issue should this be required by the Local Planning Authority.

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The Rural Planning Co

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